

Urges Relaxation of 'Perimeter Rule' Bill in FAA Reauthorization

WASHINGTON - U.S. Reps. Harry E. Mitchell and Dean Heller (R-Nev.) today spearheaded a bipartisan letter urging the inclusion of H.R. 1941, a bill to allow additional flights beyond the "perimeter rule" restriction at Washington Reagan National Airport (DCA), in the final Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) Reauthorization bill. Mitchell and Heller wrote to the Chairman and Ranking Member of the House Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, Reps. James Oberstar and John Mica, and the Chairman and Ranking Member of the House Subcommittee on Aviation, Reps. Jerry Costello and Thomas Petri, and were joined on their letter by 23 other Members of the House.

"Arizonans should have as much of a right to fly to Reagan National Airport as anyone else," said Mitchell. "The current rule is unfair, and it should be changed."

Mitchell, along with Rep. Jeff Flake (R-Ariz.), Dean Heller (R-Nev.) and Dina Titus (D-Nev.), introduced H.R. 1941 last year, which would increase the number of long-distance flights into and out of DCA.

The perimeter rule restricts non-stop access to DCA from airports located more than 1,250 miles from DCA. Currently, only a dozen nonstop flights are permitted daily between DCA and the entire western United States-four flights to Denver, three to Phoenix, two to Seattle, one to Las Vegas, one to Los Angeles, and one to Salt Lake City.

Below is the text of the letter.

June 21, 2010

The Honorable James L. Oberstar **The Honorable John L. Mica**

Chairman
Ranking Member

Committee on Transportation **Committee on Transportation**

and Infrastructure **and Infrastructure**

U.S. House of Representatives **U.S. House of Representatives**

2165 Rayburn House Office Building **2163 Rayburn House Office Building**

Washington, DC 20515 **Washington, DC 20515**

Dear Chairman Oberstar, Ranking Member Mica, Chairman Costello and Ranking Member Petri:

As you work to reach agreement with the Senate on a final F.A.A. Reauthorization bill, we respectfully urge you to press for inclusion of H.R. 1941, a bill to allow additional flights beyond the "perimeter rule" restriction at Washington Reagan National Airport (DCA), in the final package.

As you know, the perimeter rule restricts non-stop access to DCA from airports located more than 1,250 miles from DCA.

In recent years, Congress has allowed very limited and controlled exemptions to the perimeter rule. Yet, currently, only a dozen nonstop flights are permitted daily between Washington National and the entire western United States-four flights to Denver, three to Phoenix, two to Seattle, one to Las Vegas, one to Los Angeles, and one to Salt Lake City.

H.R. 1941 would increase the number of long-distance flights into and out of DCA without adding additional takeoffs or landings at DCA, while also protecting service to smaller cities located within the 1,250 mile perimeter.

Under H.R.1941, carriers that currently have slots at DCA would be permitted to convert flights now serving large hub airports inside the perimeter into flights serving airports outside the perimeter. The approach would ensure that small and medium-sized communities inside the perimeter would not be adversely impacted.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

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